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We often talk in San Bernardino about comparisons. How do we compare to other cities. In that spirit, I'd like to point out some comparisons that are really nothing more than simple observations.

For example, population in San Bernardino: 210,000; Helendale 5600

Registered Sex Offenders in San Bernardino 590; Helendale 5

Public Schools in San Bernardino 80; Helendale 4

The simple point I'm making – San Bernardino isn't like the city of Helendale in all-measurable categories. As such to apply Helendale's Fire District Plan to San Bernardino would be like putting donut spare on your 4x4 SUV. The difference in size alone makes it woefully inadequate and dangerous.

San Bernardino City Council voted 4-3 to contract out the fire department and join the County fire district in Helendale, with the promise that in doing so, they could raise \$8 million in property taxes.

I'll note here: WITHOUT A VOTE OF THE PUBLIC.

Of course, the County Board of Supervisors fully supported the move, in what can only be called collusion to avoid Proposition 13, by the San Bernardino County CEO Greg Devereaux, and some County Supervisors, along with the San Bernardino City Mayor and the Council majority.

#### KEY FACTS About Proposition 13

- Limits property tax rate to 1 percent
- Restricts rate hikes - not to exceed 2 percent per year
- Specified that a vote of the people is needed to raise local taxes. Which is not present in this case.

And that's really the elephant in the room.

This plan raises \$8 million in property taxes, WITHOUT A VOTE OF THE PEOPLE.

It does not save the city any money as was originally posited.

In my opinion, -- Helendale's Fire District is being expanded or changed to include the City of San Bernardino because redistricting can be done without a vote of the people whereas forming a new district specifically for San Bernardino would require voting. The powers that exist between the County it's Board of Supervisors, The City of San Bernardino it's Mayor and Council majority with LAFCo., are all attempting to avoid a vote on property tax increases, -- in my opinion.

Sadly even some elected members of the city council have been dishonest, careless and unaccountable when it comes to how the public tax money is allocated. Saying one thing (to get elected) and doing other things (while in office) seems to be pervasive in much of government, but especially here in San Bernardino. These politicians have done an inadequate job of protecting the people's money. We have had our tax money squandered and stolen, wasted and flat out lost.

See...the people in San Bernardino have long been duped. We've had one City Manager after the next. It's been a revolving door in the Finance Department with interim personnel littered all throughout high levels of city staff -- these people make decisions (stalling and refusing to provide documents for audits) they act without consequence, including the falsification of many of the last 2 decades of budgets reports. It's only through the lens of deception and muddy water are the finances of San Bernardino revealed, and the picture still isn't clear for the city's financial future.

If these actions are meant to help San Bernardino then, in my opinion, Prop 13 isn't something to be avoided; instead it should be dealt with head-on in an honest and transparent manner. **ALL** have stated the need for transparency in San Bernardino. So, lets begin correctly. Put the parcel tax to a vote. You all (we) have the opportunity to get it right this time.

After years of debate, time, expense, elections, failed Charter Reform votes one after the next, Charter Reform as it stands today, the recent failed ballot measure to eliminate section 186, and Outsourcing were all sold as "cost saving measures" something meant to be helpful.

Yet, today's plan to contract out the SBCFPD to the County will not "SAVE THE CITY MONEY" it will levy a imposed tax fee on all property owners in San Bernardino without a vote of the people and this new tax fee will appear on your property tax bill without your consent.

In my opinion, this is not transparent in the spirit of helpfulness and getting San Bernardino back on sound and stable financial ground. A parcel tax fee is yet another barrier to entry for potential homeowners and business and that is why I'm opposed.

Do what you are going to do today. I don't imagine much of what anyone has said today will matter since your decision is most likely a forgone conclusion but I would ask that you consider three things.

- 1) Simple. Put the parcel tax fee to a vote. Be transparent, honest and accountable to the public that elected you or appointed you. Call the spade a spade. Be Transparent.
- 2) In a letter addressed to all effected property owners provide the legal public notice and also the protest petition form and instructions for protest, so property owners have a complete picture. Again be transparent.
- 3) Provide for the longest time-line under law for the protest period to be open on the basis that unlike Helendale there are 50K+ affected property owners and sufficient time needs to be made for all people to respond. Again this is being transparent.

Thank you for the time. I hope you recognized a theme. We have put our trust in our elected leaders but it seems at every turn policy makers are making policy that will further hurt this city's ability to generate economic growth. Please give the people of San Bernardino some hope and change the way this tax fee is to be implemented.

Give the people an opportunity to properly and rightly be notified in a transparent manner of your actions.

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